

REMARKS

Claims 17, 18, 19 and 43 to 45 are canceled without prejudice, and therefore claims 16, 20 to 22, 24 to 39, 41 and 42 are pending.

Applicants respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of this response.

Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claims 16, 24 to 31, 33 to 39 and 41.

Applicants also thank the Examiner for indicating that claim 42 contains allowable subject matter. While the objection may not be agreed with, to facilitate matters, claim 42 has been rewritten as an independent claim by including the features of independent claim 43, which has been canceled without prejudice to facilitate matters. Approval and entry are respectfully requested, as is withdrawal of the objection.

With respect to the objection as to claim 18 in paragraph one (1) of the Final Office Action, claim 18 has been canceled without prejudice, and claims 20 to 22 and 32 now depend from claim 16 and not claim 18, which has been canceled without prejudice. Accordingly, claims 20 to 22 and 32 are allowable. It is therefore respectfully requested that the objections be withdrawn.

With respect to paragraph four (4), claims 18 to 22 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over the “Yazaki” reference (GB 2 269 681) in view of Kleinschmidt, U.S. Patent No. 6,750,832.

To reject a claim under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the Office bears the initial burden of presenting a prima facie case of obviousness. In re Rijckaert, 9 F.3d 1531, 1532, 28 U.S.P.Q.2d 1955, 1956 (Fed. Cir. 1993). To establish prima facie obviousness, three criteria must be satisfied. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation to modify or combine reference teachings. In re Fine, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988). This teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination must be found in the prior art and not based on the application disclosure. In re Vaeck, 947 F.2d 488, 20 U.S.P.Q.2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991). Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. In re Merck & Co., Inc., 800 F.2d 1091, 231 U.S.P.Q. 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Third, the prior art reference(s)

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must teach or suggest all of the claim features. In re Royka, 490 F.2d 981, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (C.C.P.A. 1974).

While the rejections may not be agreed with, to facilitate matters, claims 18 and 19 have been canceled without prejudice, and claims 20 to 22 and 32 now depend from claim 16 and not claim 18, which has been canceled without prejudice. Accordingly, claims 20 to 22 and 32 are allowable.

It is therefore respectfully requested that the obviousness rejections of claims 18 to 22 and 32 be withdrawn.

With respect to paragraph five (5), claims 17 and 43 to 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over the "Yazaki" reference (GB 2 269 681) in view of Hwang et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,317,170.

While the rejections may not be agreed with, to facilitate matters, claims 17 and 43 to 45 have been canceled without prejudice. It is therefore respectfully requested that the obviousness rejections of claims 17 and 43 to 45 be withdrawn.

Accordingly, claims 16, 20 to 22, 24 to 39, 41 and 42 are allowable.

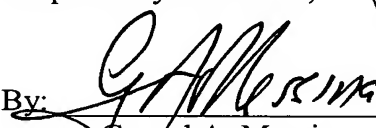
CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is believed that the objections and the rejections have been obviated, and it is therefore respectfully submitted that claims 16, 20 to 22, 24 to 39, 41 and 42 are allowable. It is therefore respectfully requested that the objections and rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn, and that the present application issue as early as possible.

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Respectfully submitted,

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